sanctioned and the availability of funds. The amount allocated to the State of Kerala during the last 3 years is as under:—

| Year | Amount (Rs. in lakhs) |
|---|---|
| 1994-95 | 104.00 |
| 1995-96 | 17.00 |
| 1996-97 | 6.00 (Proposed) |

**Seminar on Problems of Goods Transport Sector**

1293. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a National Seminar to discuss problems of Goods Transport Sector was organised at Hyderabad in January, 1997;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to take some action to implement suggestions and decisions taken in the Seminar; and

(d) if so, the details thereof; and if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha.

**Widening of National Highway No. 51**

1294. DR. B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are launching a scheme, in near future to widen and convert the National Highway, No. 51 into double lane, near Tura; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) and (b) Widening to two lanes (without strengthening) of 20 km. length of National Highway No. 51 near Tura has been included in the Annual Plan 1996-97 at the cost of Rs. 6.00 crores. The details estimate from the State of Meghalaya is awaited.

**Funds for Sick NTC Mills Workers**

1295. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have approved funds for the sick National Textile Mills (NTC) to enable the company to pay pending wages to nearly 50,000 mills workers;

(b) whether Government are required to pay Rs. 62 crore to the idle work force of NTC, if so, the reasons therefore; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take so as to stop payment of such idle wages in future which is a loss to the exchequer?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) During the current financial year, Govenrment have released funds amounting to Rs.303 crores to cover the shortfall faced by NTC in payment of wages, salaries and bonus to its employment.

(b) The monthly wage bill of NTC employees and workers is about Rs.40 crores, out of which about Rs.31 crores is estimated to be on account of idle wages.

(c) The Government had approved a Turn Around Plan in 1995 for rehabilitation of the NTC mills. The Plan was subsequently placed before the BIFR, for their consideration. The investment needs of the mills under this Plan are to be funded from proceeds of surplus land/assets. On account of difficulties being faced in obtaining BIFR approval and in effecting land sales, it has not been possible to implement the Turn Around Plan.